

---

## OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET ANALYST REPORT

---

**Date Issued:** November 9, 2007

**IBA Report Number:** 07-110

**Budget Committee Date:** November 14, 2007

**Item Number:** 1

---

# Benchmarking of the Park and Recreation and Library Departments

## OVERVIEW

During development of the Fiscal Year 2008 budget, Council Members Atkins and Madaffer requested that the IBA prepare an independent review of department service levels, including benchmarking, for the Park and Recreation and Library Departments.

*Benchmarking refers to the process of critically evaluating a program's or service's activities, functions, operations, and processes to achieve a desired level of performance.*

In preparing this report, the IBA reviewed available information, including best practices and recommended criteria on this subject, from various governmental organizations, including the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA),

the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

Because this report focuses on library and parks, the IBA reviewed information compiled on a statewide basis by the California State Library Foundation, and data gathered nationally by the Trust for Public Lands, and the Public Library Data Service, and considered guidelines and criteria of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Additionally, our office consulted with the Mayor's Business Office, and worked closely with representatives from both the Library and Park and Recreation Departments. Each department provided suggestions and guidance on sources of data, applicable measures,

and appropriate jurisdictions to utilize for comparison purposes, which was extremely helpful to us in completing this task. As always, our office relied heavily on City budgetary information, and researched budgetary documents and performance measurement reports from many jurisdictions around the country.

***Benchmarks are established in one of four ways:***

- *Comparisons to past performance*
- *Comparisons to similar organizations*
- *Comparisons to accepted industry standards*
- *Setting a performance target to be achieved*

Initial discussion of this report focuses on recommended budgetary practices as it relates to performance measures, followed by budgetary and comparative information which has been assembled for the Library and Park and Recreation Departments. This information includes comparisons of San Diego with other jurisdictions in terms of facilities and amenities, and historical staffing and spending data is also provided.

**This report is intended to provide information that has not been readily available in recent budget documents, and to encourage dialogue about expectations related to desired budgetary information and performance measures in the future.**

## FISCAL/POLICY DISCUSSION

### Recommended Budgetary Practices

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and seven other state and local government associations created the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting (NACSLB) in 1995. In 1997, the NACSLB adopted a budgeting framework and recommended budget practice statements in the area of state and local budgeting.

The NACSLB recommended practices were intended to strengthen the linkage between budgeting and other government activities, such as long-term financial planning, expenditure and revenue forecasting, and establishing and incorporating performance measurement within a government's financial management and budgeting framework.

***Performance Measures are specific quantitative measures or qualitative assessments of results obtained through a program or activity, and summarize the relationship between inputs and outputs in achieving outcomes with respect to effectiveness, cost (efficiency), and quality.***

GFOA adopted the NACSLB framework for improved state and local government budgeting and the recommended budget practice statements. In 2002 and again in 2007, GFOA issued its recommended practice "Performance Management: Using Performance Measurement for Decision Making", which recommends that program and service

performance measures be developed and used as an important component of long term strategic planning and decision-making which should be linked to governmental budgeting. GFOA encourages all governments to utilize performance measures as an integral part of the budget process, and states that, over time, performance measures should be used to report on the outputs and outcomes of each program and should be related to the mission, goals and objectives of each department.

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) has issued Concepts Statements related to financial reporting, and service efforts and accomplishments reporting that state, ideally, a governmental entity should:

- establish and communicate clear, relevant goals and objectives
- set measurable targets for accomplishment
- develop and report indicators that measure its progress in achieving those goals and objectives (measures of performance)

***Performance Measures  
should be:***

- *Comprehensive*
- *Meaningful and understandable*
- *Reliable*
- *Simple*
- *Valid*
- *Verifiable*

ICMA (International City/County Management Association) is the professional and educational organization for managers, administrators, and assistants in cities, towns, counties, and regional entities throughout the world, since 1914. Its mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide.

The ICMA Center for Performance Measurement was formed to help local governments measure, compare, and improve municipal service delivery. ICMA's Comparative Performance Measurement Program currently assists over 200 cities and counties in the United States and Canada with the collection, analysis, and application of performance information. Review of many city budget documents and performance reports show the utilization of ICMA survey data. ICMA is a resource that should be considered by the City of San Diego to assist with compilation and reporting of comparative data for various City departments.

## Comparisons with Other Cities

Our review focused on the following cities/jurisdictions for comparison purposes:

- Anaheim
- Dallas
- Detroit
- Denver
- Indianapolis - Marion County
- Las Vegas - Clark County
- Long Beach
- Los Angeles
- Oakland
- Phoenix
- San Francisco
- San Jose
- Santa Ana
- Seattle

Additionally, budgets and performance measure reports were reviewed for many other cities, some of which are award-winning, and have been offered as examples in best practices of performance budgeting. Based on our review, many performance measures were reoccurring for Park and Recreation and Library services.

Common performance measures reflect a combination of all types of measures, including inputs/outputs, workload statistics, as well as quality and efficiency measures. Most city budgets reviewed included a variety of the types of measures for each department, appropriately labeling each type, which assists a reader of the document in understanding the data and information to be communicated.

Most budgets reviewed showed performance information across numerous fiscal years, enabling readers to view trends over time, and to see the effect of budgetary changes on services.

***Performance Measures***  
*can be classified into six categories:*

- *Effectiveness*
- *Efficiency*
- *Outcomes*
- *Outputs*
- *Quality*
- *Workload*

Examples of other noteworthy city budget and performance reports are provided as attachments to this report, including the City of Raleigh, North Carolina (Attachment 1), the City of Sunnyvale, California (Attachment 2), and the City of Peoria, Arizona (Attachment 3).

Following is a listing of common performance measures for both departments to provide a framework of the kinds of measures that should be considered to enable easy comparisons with other jurisdictions. The IBA assembled data on many of these listed measures.

| Common Performance Measures   |  |
|---|--|
| <u>Park &amp; Recreation</u>  | <u>Library</u>   |
| <i>Parks Cost Per Capita</i>  | <i>Library Cost per Capita</i>                                       |
| <i>Park Acreage per Square Mile of Area Served</i>                          | <i>Registered Library Borrowers as a Percentage of Population</i>    |
| <i>Total Park Acres per 1,000 Population</i>                                | <i>Total Library Facilities per 1,000 Population</i>                 |
| <i>Percent of Park Acreage Developed</i>                                    | <i>Total Materials/Holding per 1,000 Population</i>                  |
| <i>Athletic Fields Maintained per Square Mile</i>                           | <i>Total Annual Circulation per 1,000 Population (or Per Capita)</i> |
| <i>Tennis Courts Maintained per Square Mile</i>                             | <i>Total Annual Circulation per Registered Borrower</i>              |
| <i>Miles of Bike, Walking, and Hiking Trails Maintained per Square Mile</i> | <i>Average Hours of Operation per Week – Branch Libraries</i>        |
| <i>Acres of Golf Courses Operated per Square Mile</i>                       | <i>Library Visitation Rate per Capita</i>                            |
| <i>General Maintenance Expenditures Per Golf Course Acre</i>                | <i>Operating and Maintenance Expenditures per Capita</i>             |
| <i>Number of Volunteer Hours</i>  | <i>Operating and Maintenance Expenditures per Item Circulated</i>    |
| <i>Value of Gifts/Donations accepted</i>                                    | <i>Total Library Full-Time Equivalents per 1,000 Population</i>      |
| <i>Number of Participants in Aquatics Program/Organized Programs</i>        | <i>Number of Information/Reference Questions Answered</i>            |
| <i>Surveys/inspections to Maintain Adopted Standards</i>                    | <i>Number of Public Computer Sessions</i>                            |
| <i>Customer Satisfaction Surveys</i>  | <i>Customer Satisfaction Surveys</i>                                 |

## **LIBRARY DEPARTMENT**

The charts in this section depict benchmarking comparisons to other local governments that are similar in population, size, and type of library system to the City of San Diego. The cities selected by the IBA for comparison include:

- Dallas
- Detroit
- Denver
- Indianapolis - Marion County
- Las Vegas - Clark County
- Phoenix
- San Francisco
- San Jose
- Seattle

With the exception of Las Vegas – Clark County, the comparison cities each have a number of branches and a large Central library. Las Vegas – Clark County has three large regional branches instead of a Central library. It should be noted that Indianapolis and Las Vegas include both City and County areas of operation. San Francisco also operates as a joint City-County jurisdiction.

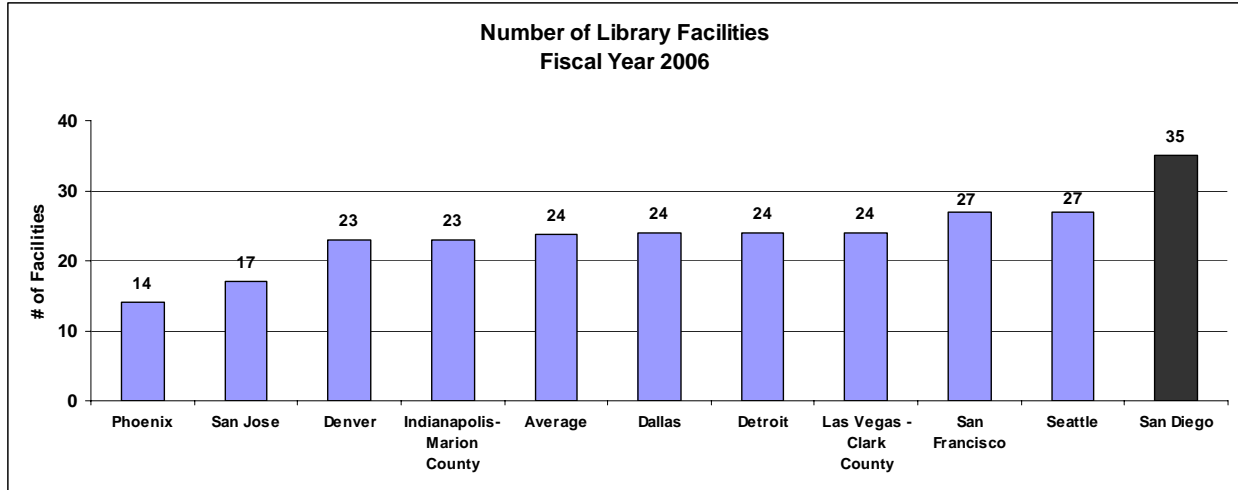
For this section, the comparison cities data comes from the 2007 Public Library Data Service (PLDS) Statistical Report. The PLDS Statistical Report is published annually and presents data from 873 public libraries across the country on finances, library resources, and annual use figures. The data included in the 2007 PLDS Statistical Report reflects actual figures from Fiscal Year 2006.

The City of San Diego's data information for this section comes from the California State Library Foundation's 2007 Library Statistics Report. The 2007 Library Statistics Report provides similar information as reflected in the PLDS Statistical report for the State of California's Public, Academic, Special and County Law Libraries. The data included in the 2007 Library Statistical Report reflects actual figures from Fiscal Year 2006.

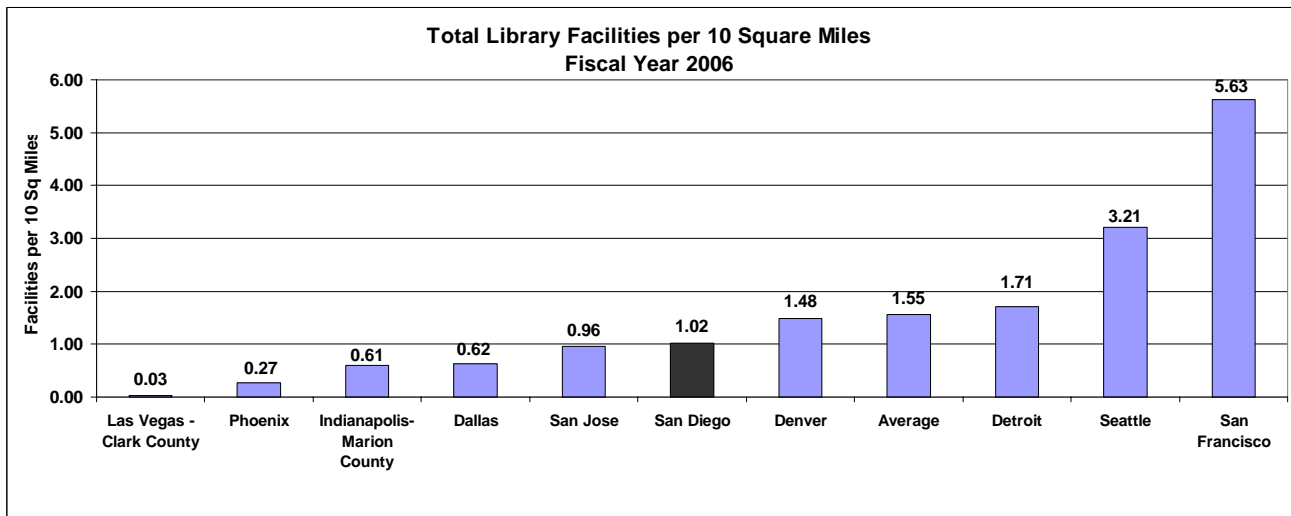
The charts in this section are arranged into four categories: Facilities, Staffing, Services, and Operating Expenditures.

### Facilities

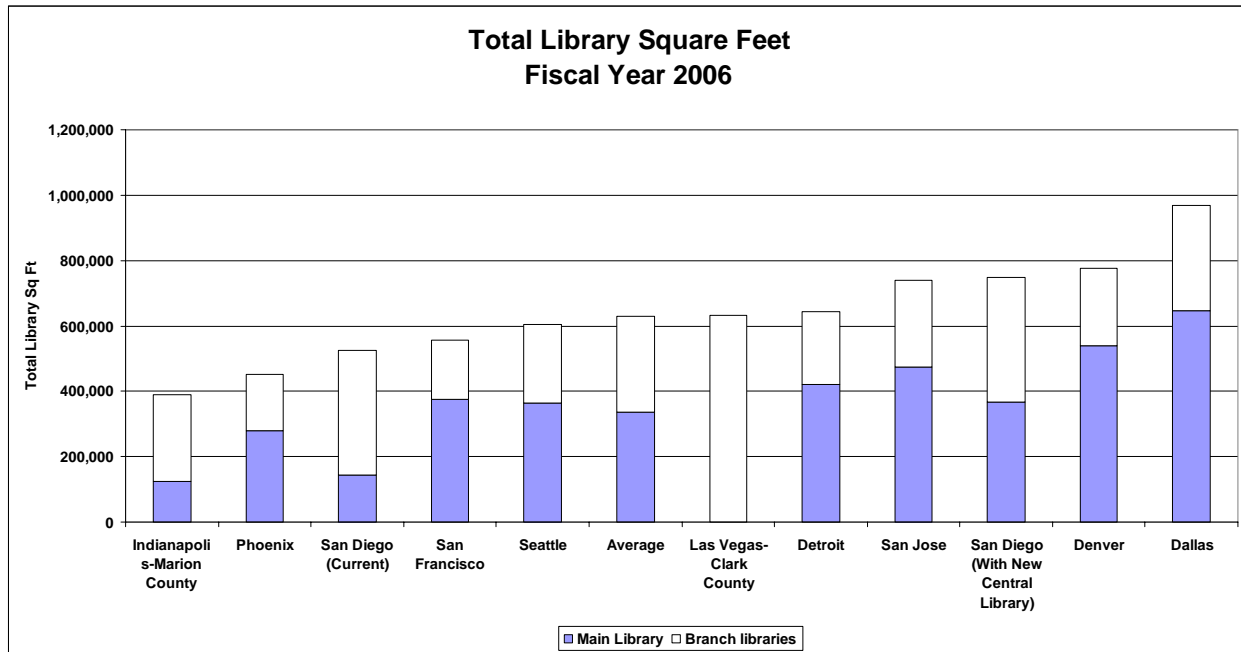
The following chart reflects the total number of library facilities (Central and Branch Libraries) for each of the comparison cities. In 2006, San Diego ranked 1<sup>st</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



The following chart reflects the total library facilities (Central and Branch Libraries) per 10 Square Miles. In 2006, San Diego ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



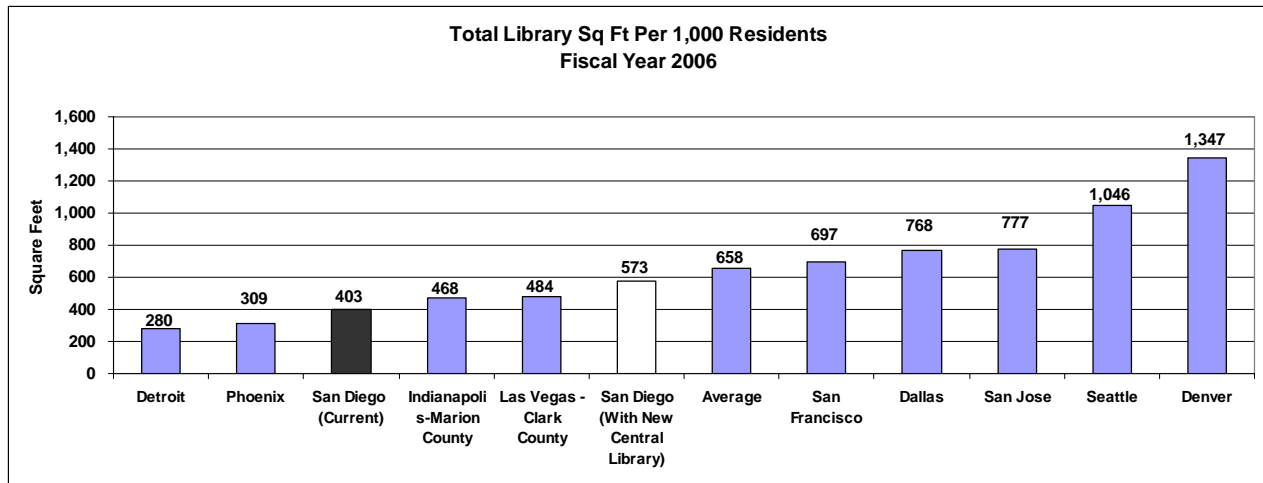
The following chart reflects the total library square feet for each of the comparison cities. For San Diego, the chart reflects the 2006 total square feet with the **current** Central Library, and for comparison purposes, the total square feet if a **new** Central library is constructed, based on plan designs for a new 366,000 square foot facility. In 2006, San Diego ranked 8<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities in the comparison. If a new Central Library is constructed, San Diego would rank 3<sup>rd</sup> in the comparison.



| Square Feet | Indiana-polis | Phoenix | San Diego | SF      | Seattle | Avg     | Las Vegas | Detroit | San Jose | San Diego with new | Denver  | Dallas  |
|-------------|---------------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|----------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Main        | 123,550       | 280,000 | 144,524   | 376,000 | 362,987 | 336,911 | 0         | 420,000 | 475,000  | 366,094            | 540,315 | 646,733 |
| Branches    | 266,230       | 171,732 | 381,639   | 180,653 | 242,300 | 292,092 | 631,156   | 224,773 | 265,729  | 381,639            | 235,424 | 321,284 |
| Total       | 389,780       | 451,732 | 526,163   | 556,653 | 605,287 | 629,003 | 631,156   | 644,773 | 740,729  | 747,733            | 775,739 | 968,017 |

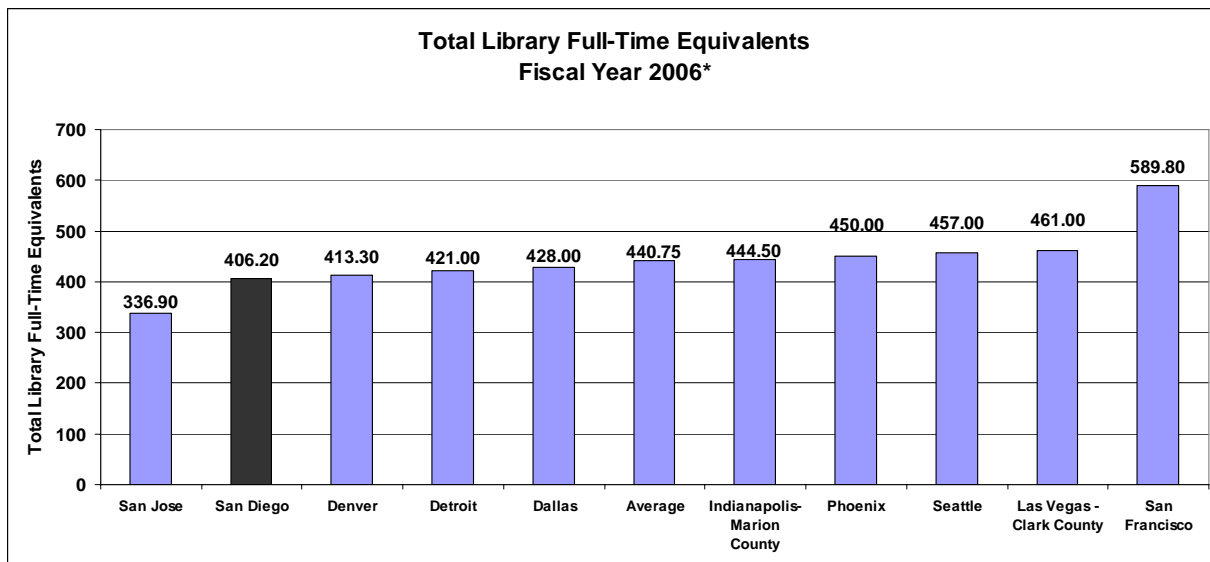


The following chart reflects the total library square feet per 1,000 residents. For San Diego, the chart reflects the 2006 total square feet per 1,000 residents with the **current** Central Library and, for comparison purposes, the total square feet per 1,000 residents if a **new** Central library is constructed. In 2006, San Diego ranked 8<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities in the comparison. If a new Central Library is constructed, San Diego would rank 6<sup>th</sup>.



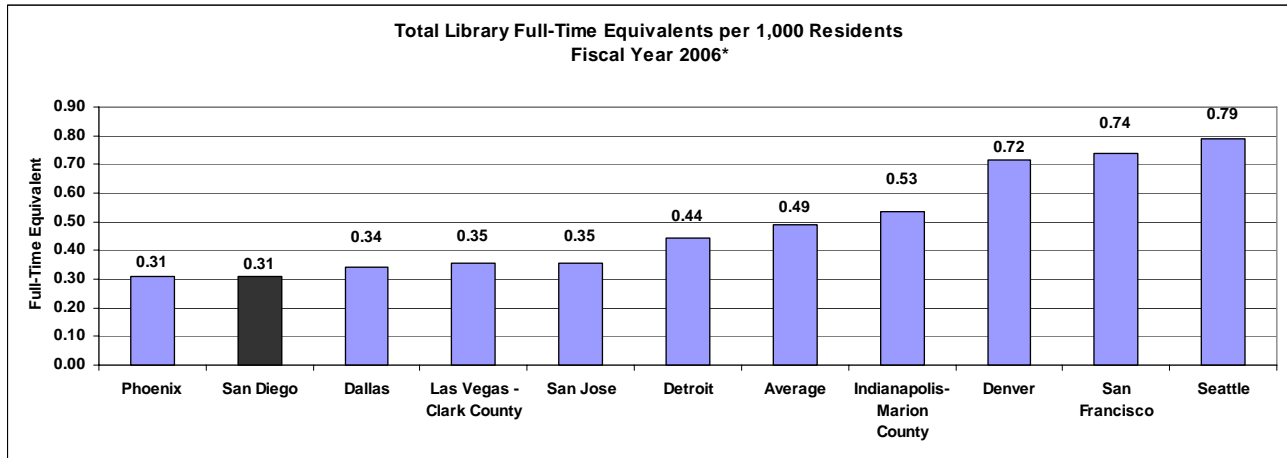
### Staffing

The following chart reflects the total library Full-Time Equivalents (Staff) for each of the comparison cities. In 2006, San Diego ranked 9<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



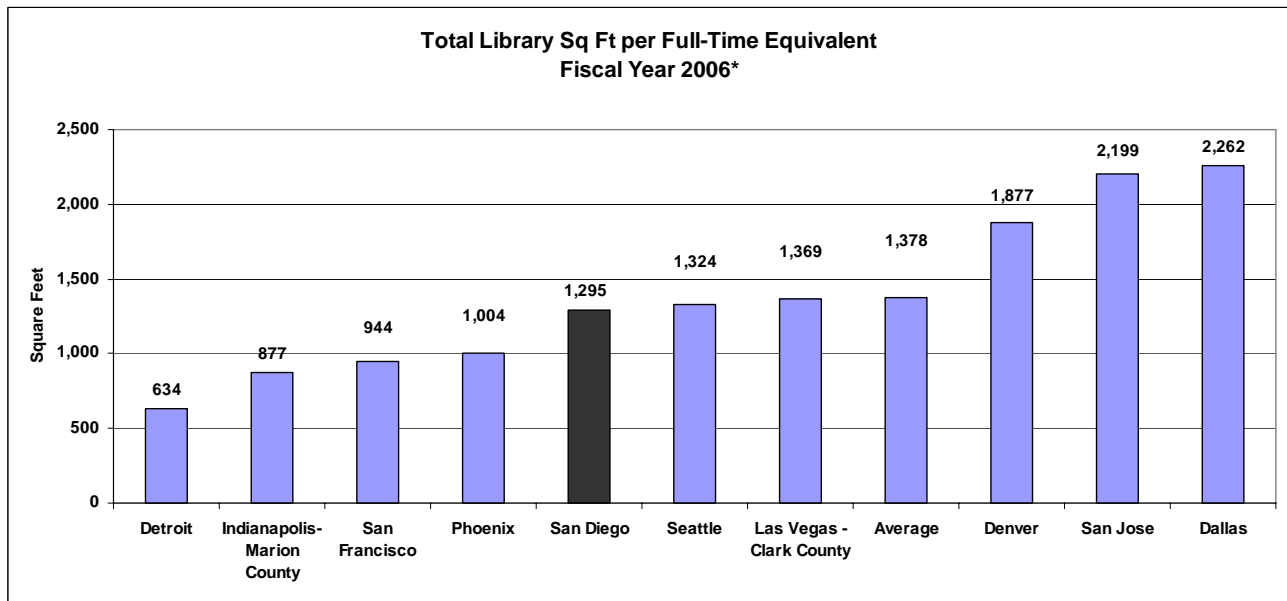
\*Full-Time Equivalent figures reflect budgeted figures

The following chart reflects the total library Full-Time Equivalent (Staff) per 1,000 residents. In 2006, San Diego ranked 9<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



\*Full-Time Equivalent figures reflect budgeted figures

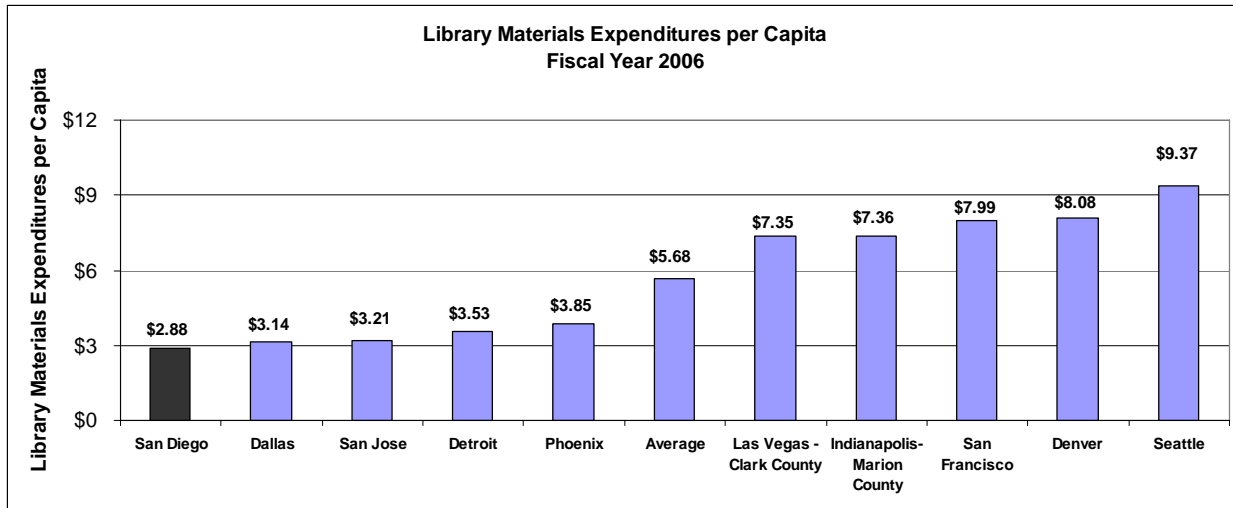
The following chart reflects the total library square feet per Full-Time Equivalent (Staff). In 2006, San Diego ranked 6<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



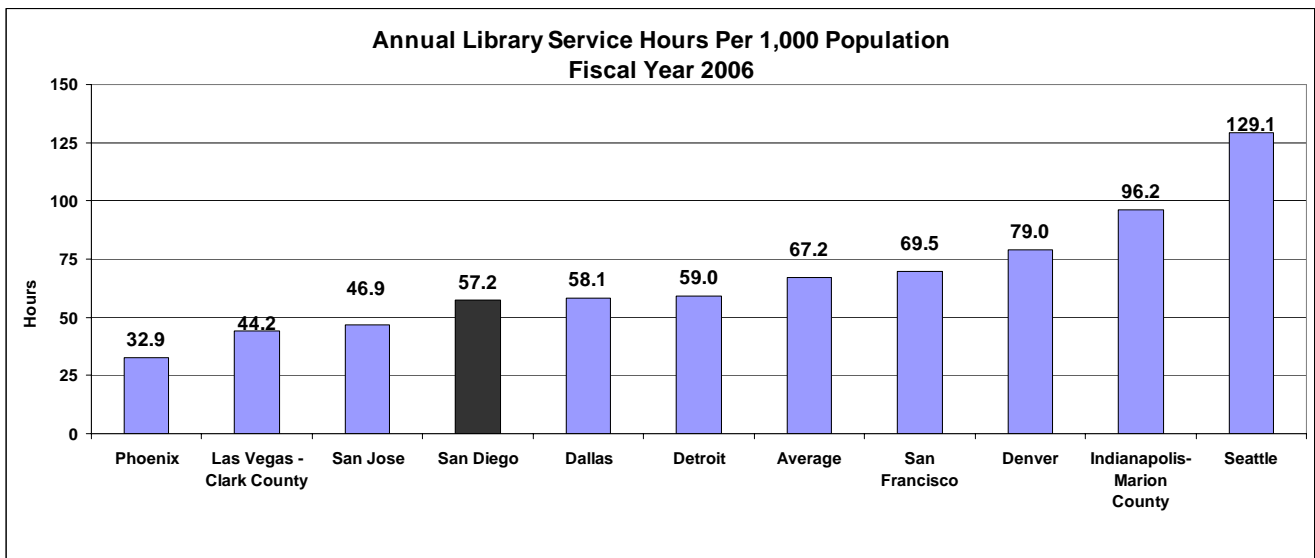
\*Full-Time Equivalent figures reflect budgeted figures

### Services

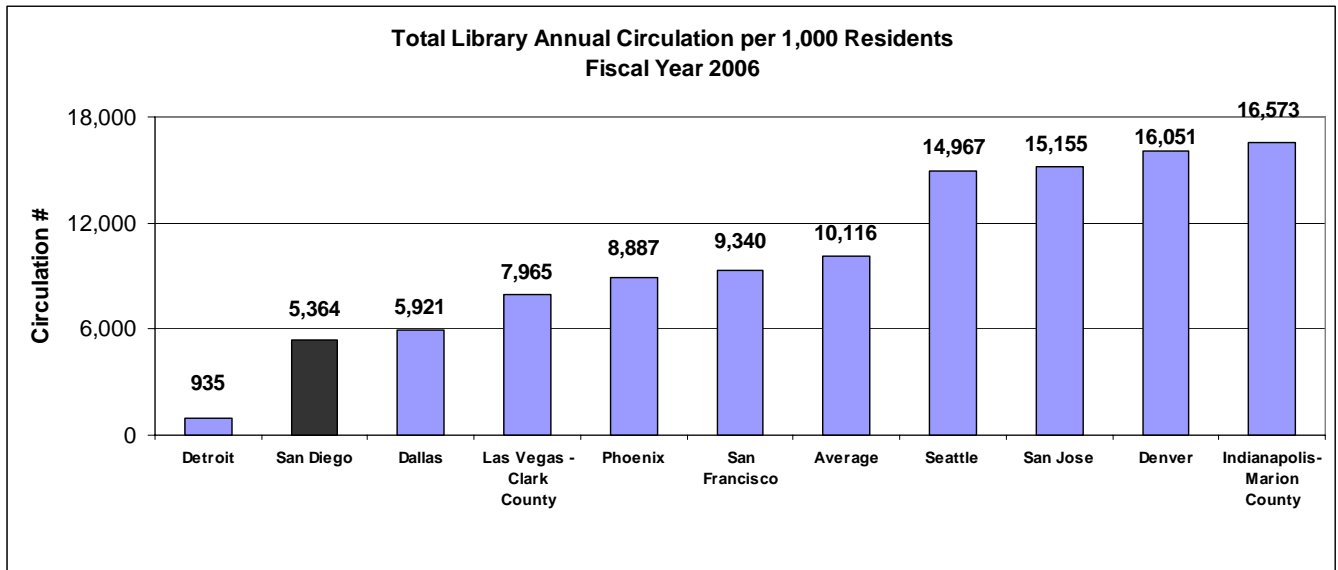
The following chart reflects library materials expenditures per capita. Library materials include books, periodicals, audio-visual and electronic resources which can be checked out by patrons, used in libraries but not checked out (e.g. reference materials), or accessed via the library's online systems. In 2006, San Diego ranked 10<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



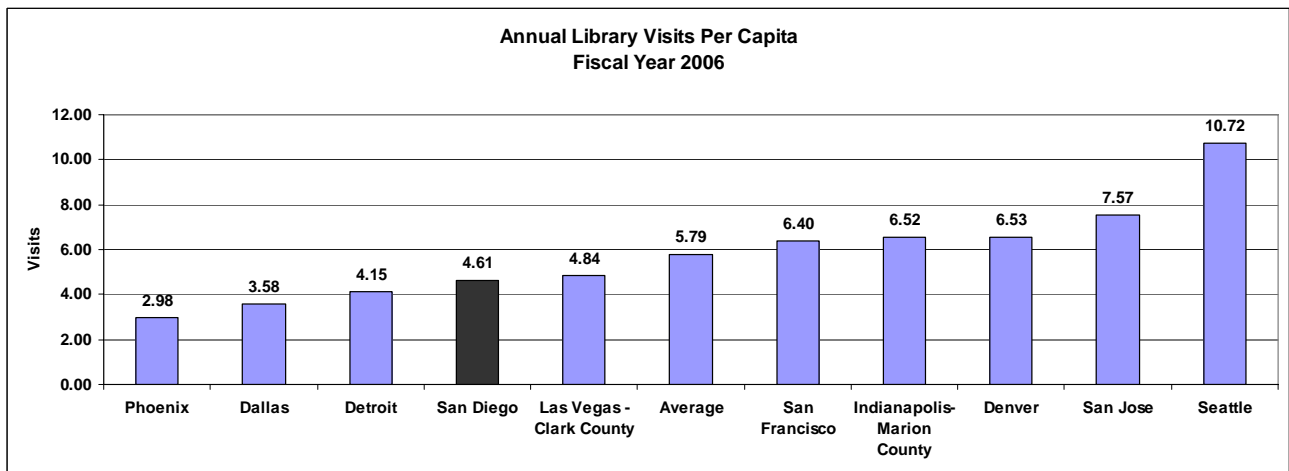
The following chart reflects the annual library service hours per 1,000 residents. In 2006, San Diego ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



The following chart reflects the annual circulation per 1,000 residents. Library circulation tracks the number of library materials checked out by the Library's customers. In 2006, San Diego ranked 9<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.

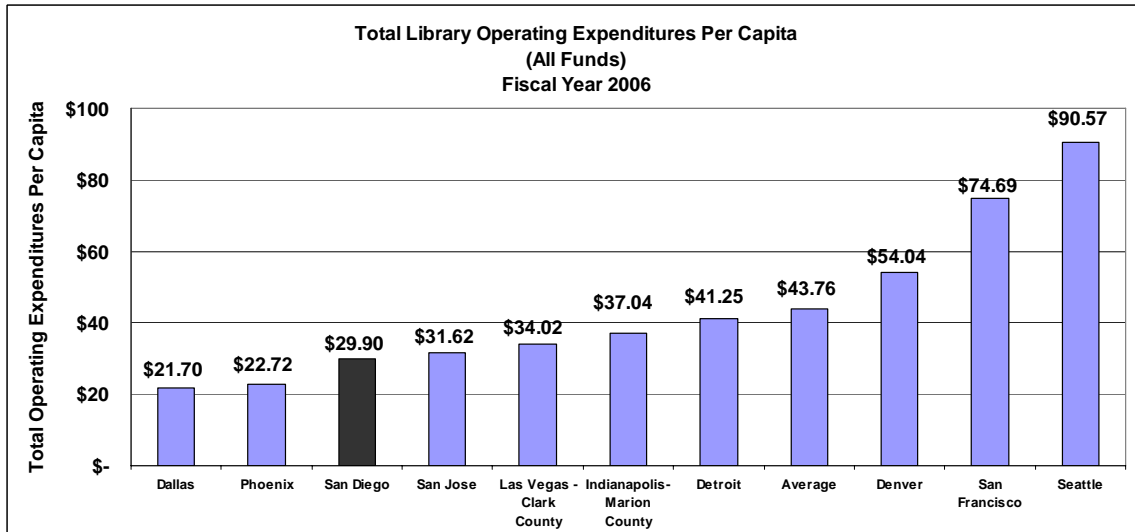


The following chart reflects the annual visits per capita. In 2006, San Diego ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.

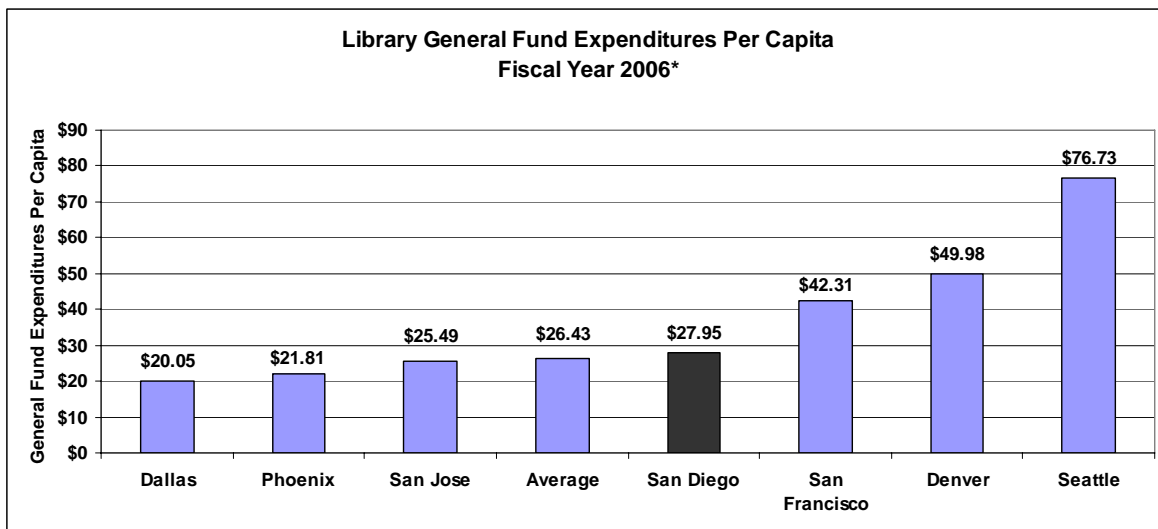


### Operating Expenditures

The following chart reflects the total library operating expenditures per capita. This chart includes all funding sources for each city's library system. In 2006, San Diego ranked 8<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.

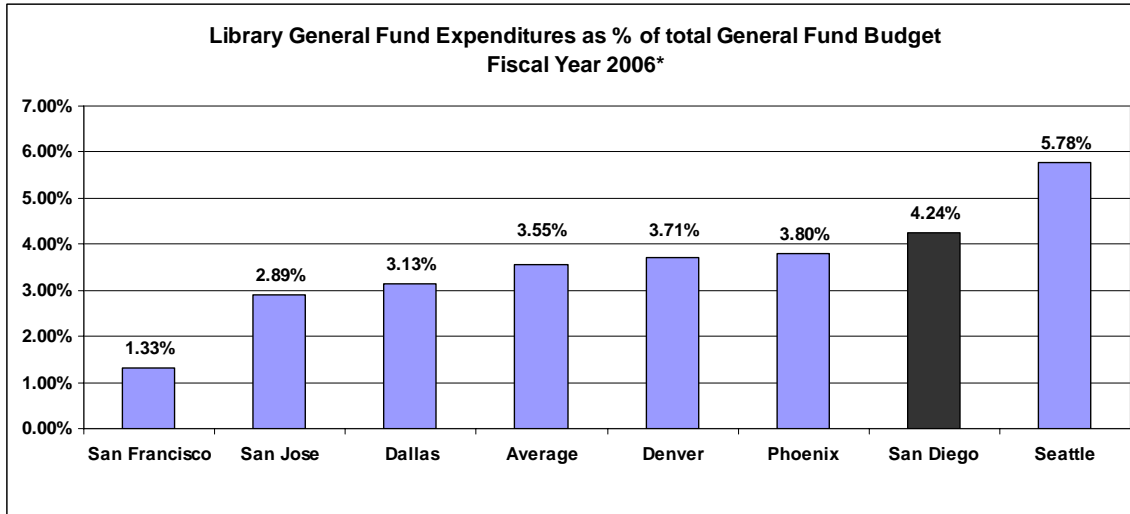


The following chart reflects the library General Fund expenditures per capita. Las Vegas-Clark County, Detroit, and Indianapolis-Marion County receive funding from sources other than their city's General Fund. These cities have been left out of the comparison. In 2006, San Diego ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of the 7 cities compared.



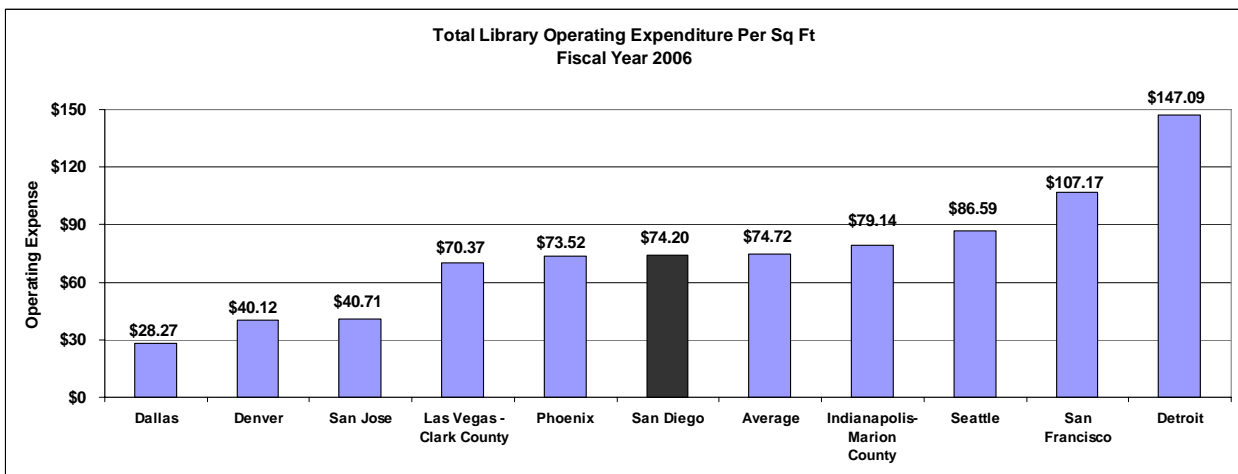
\*Reflects budgeted figures. General Fund Information for each City was collected by the City of San Diego Office of the Independent Budget Analyst.

The following chart reflects the Library General Fund Expenditures as a percent of the total of each city's General Fund Budget. Las Vegas-Clark County, Detroit, and Indianapolis-Marion County receive funding from sources other than their city's General Fund. These cities have been left out of the comparison. In 2006, San Diego ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> out of the 7 cities compared.

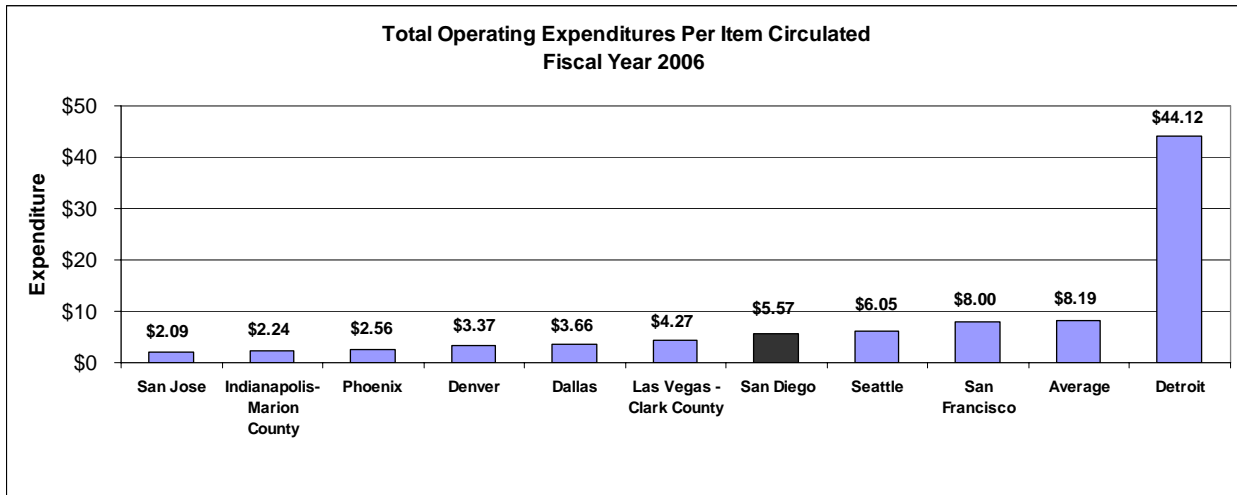


\* Reflects budgeted figures. General Fund Information for each City was collected by the City of San Diego Office of the Independent Budget Analyst.

The following chart reflects the total library operating expenditures per square foot. This chart includes all funding sources for each city's library system. In 2006, San Diego ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



The following chart reflects the total library operating expenditures per item circulated. In 2006, San Diego ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of the 10 cities compared.



## **PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

Through an annual survey, the Center for City Park Excellence, part of the Trust for Public Land, maintains the nation's most complete database of park facts for the largest sixty cities in the United States. Extracting data for seven other California cities included in the survey, a comparison has been made between San Diego and other municipalities related to the number, size and types of city parks and facilities. In addition, expenditure data for park purposes is also available. Because of the lag time in collecting and reporting data, the following tables reflect information from Fiscal Years 2005 and 2006, unless otherwise noted.

In this case, comparisons were limited to California cities, because of the outdoor nature of park and recreation activities. Weather differences in other parts of the country may result in incomparable budgetary decisions and the provision of services. Also, all California cities are similarly constrained in the ability to raise tax revenues for general purposes.

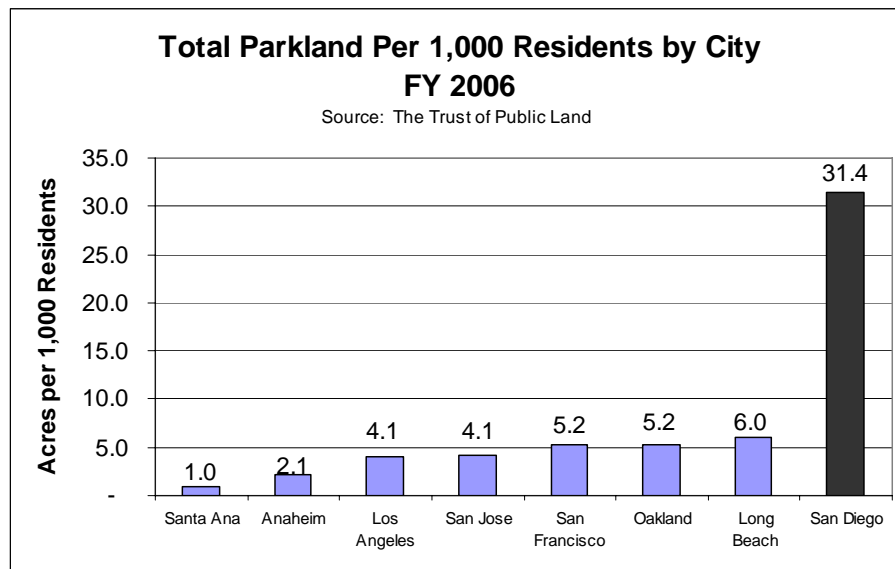
The California cities selected by the IBA for comparison include:

- Anaheim
- Long Beach
- Los Angeles
- Oakland
- San Francisco
- San Jose
- Santa Ana

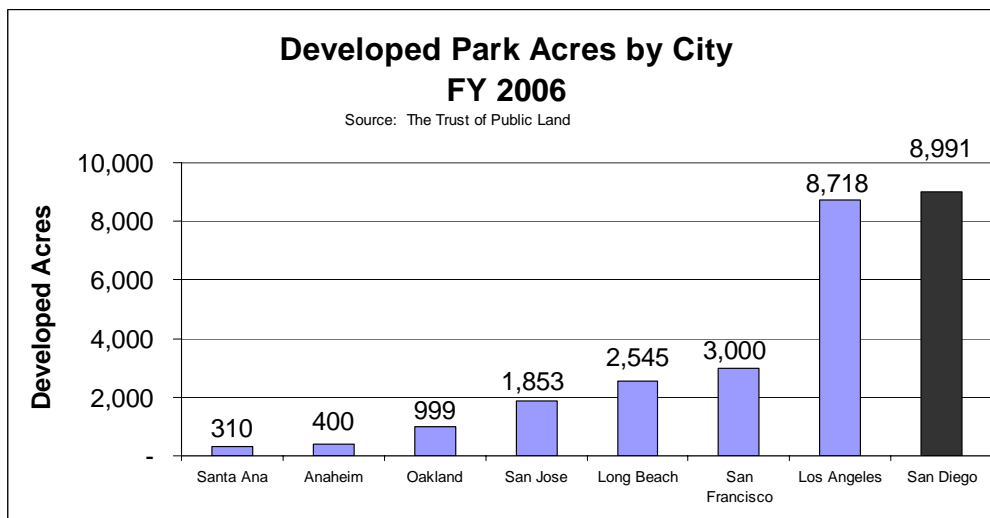
The charts in this section are arranged into three categories: Facilities, Staffing, and Operating Expenditures.

### Facilities

As shown in the chart below, the City of San Diego has the greatest number of park acres per 1,000 residents when compared to the other seven cities.

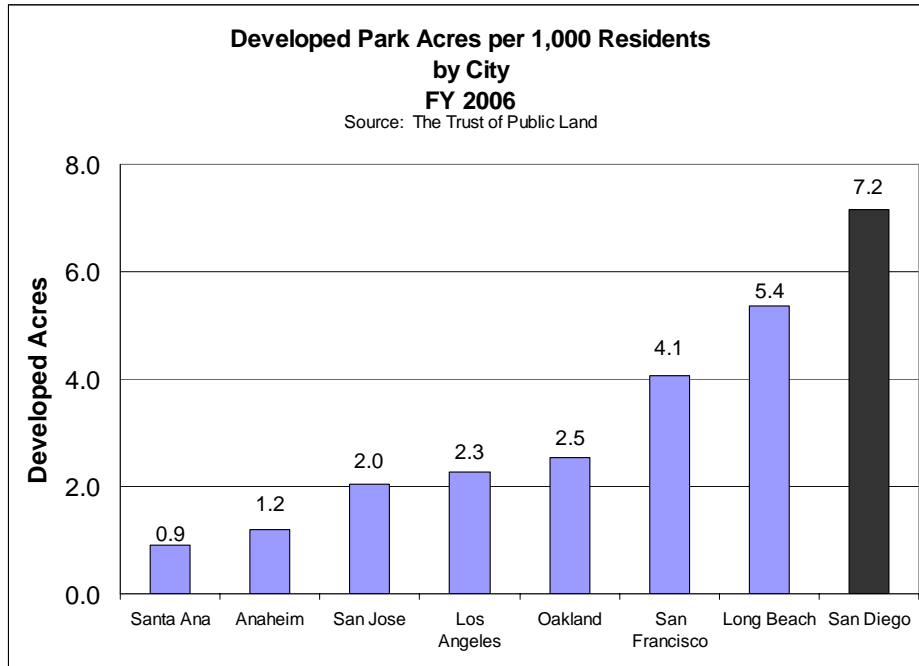


While San Diego has a comparatively large amount of park acreage, a significant amount remains undeveloped. This chart reflects Developed Park Acres, excluding open space, which shows that San Diego ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the number of Developed Park Acres compared to the other cities.

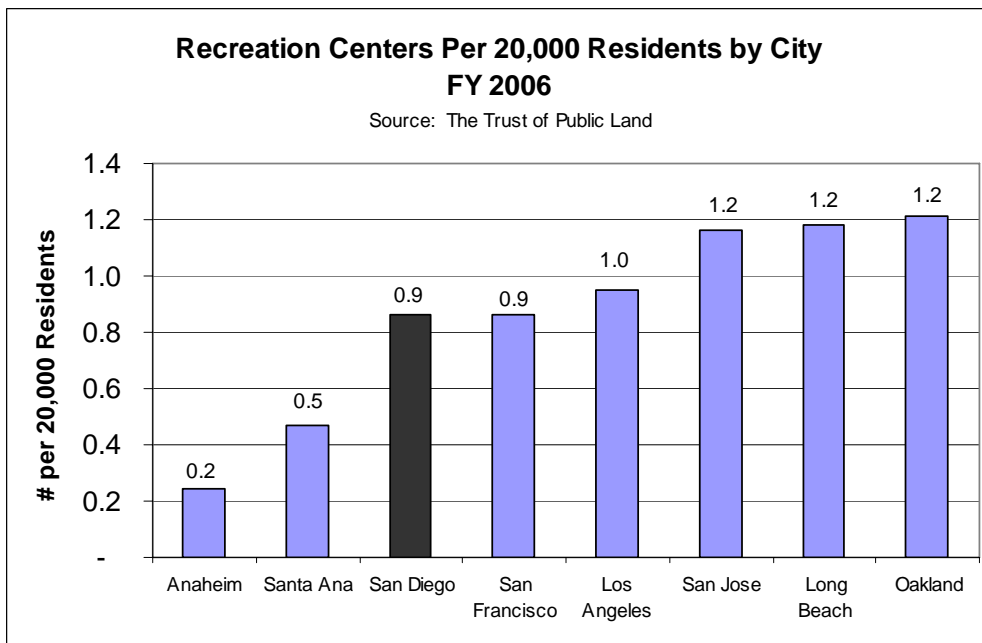




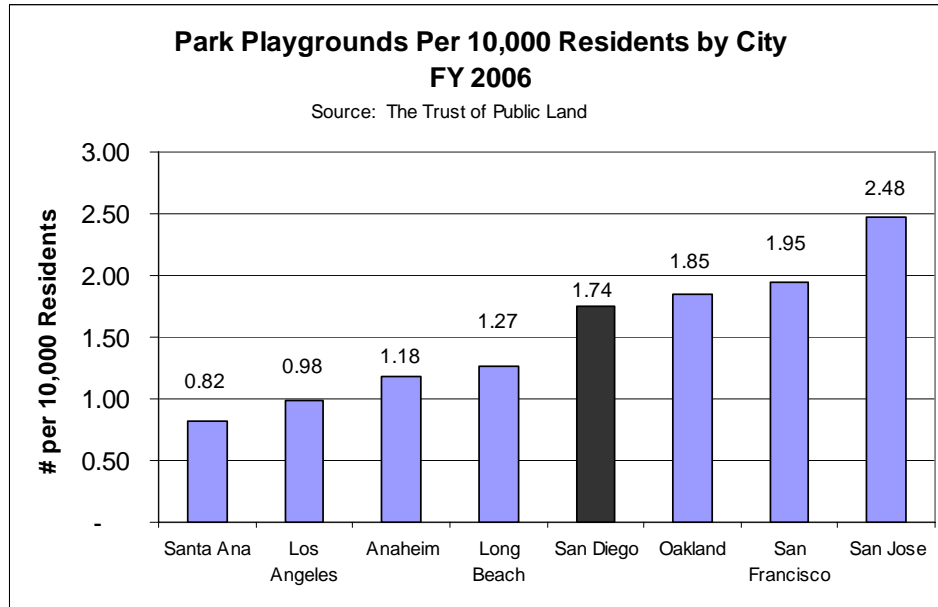
When comparing park acres to the population served by each city, San Diego still remains 1<sup>st</sup> in the comparison of Developed Park Acres per 1,000 Residents.



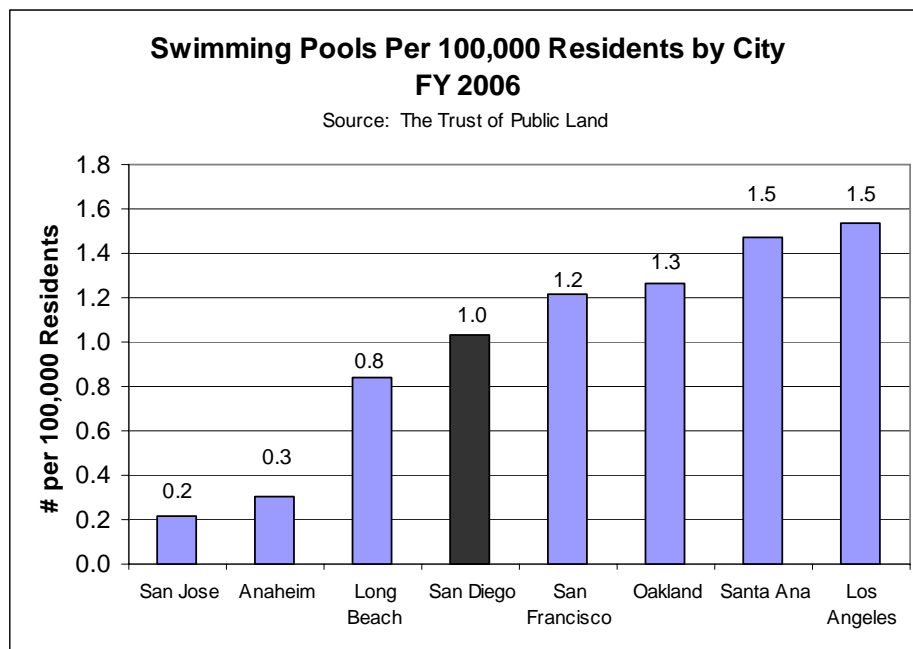
According to this survey, San Diego has a total of 54 recreation centers, while Los Angeles is reported to operate 183 and San Francisco reports a total of 32. However, when compared as a ratio with each city's population, San Diego is tied with San Francisco and ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in the comparison, and Los Angeles is only slightly higher in the number of Recreation Centers per 20,000 residents.



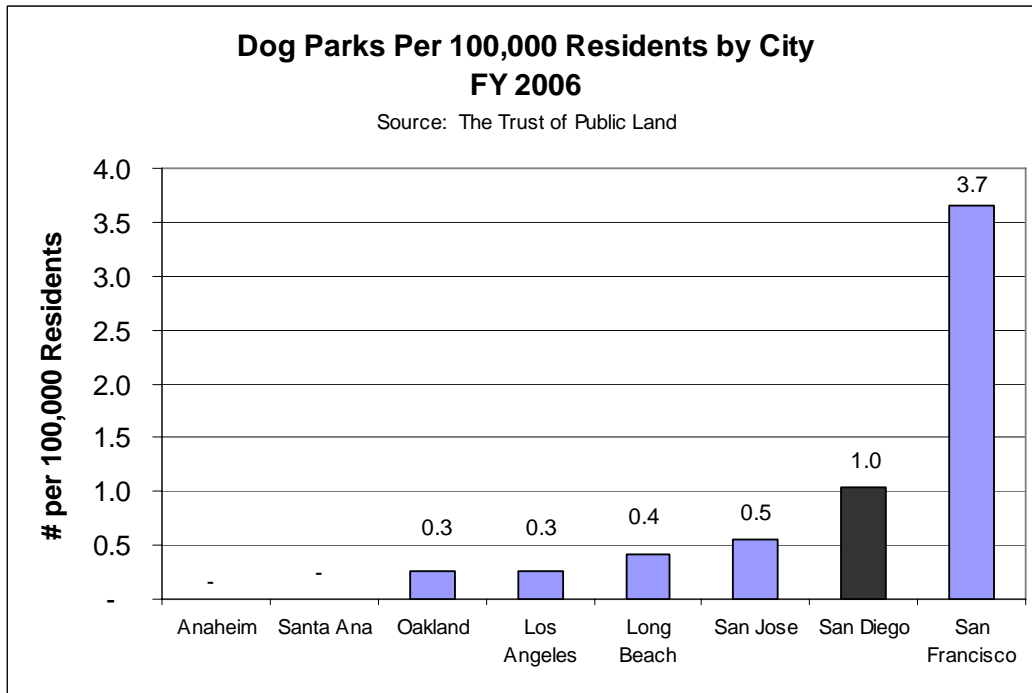
Similarly, San Diego's park playgrounds total 219, while Los Angeles reported a total of 378. Put in the context of the number of city residents served shows San Diego ranks 4<sup>th</sup> among the cities in the comparison, whereas Los Angeles falls to 7<sup>th</sup> out of the eight cities shown.



The chart below reflects the number of swimming pools per 100,000 residents, and shows San Diego ranks 5<sup>th</sup>, with a total of 13 pools, which equates to one pool per 100,000 residents. The City of San Diego's general plan calls for one pool for every 50,000 residents, or twice the number of current pools.

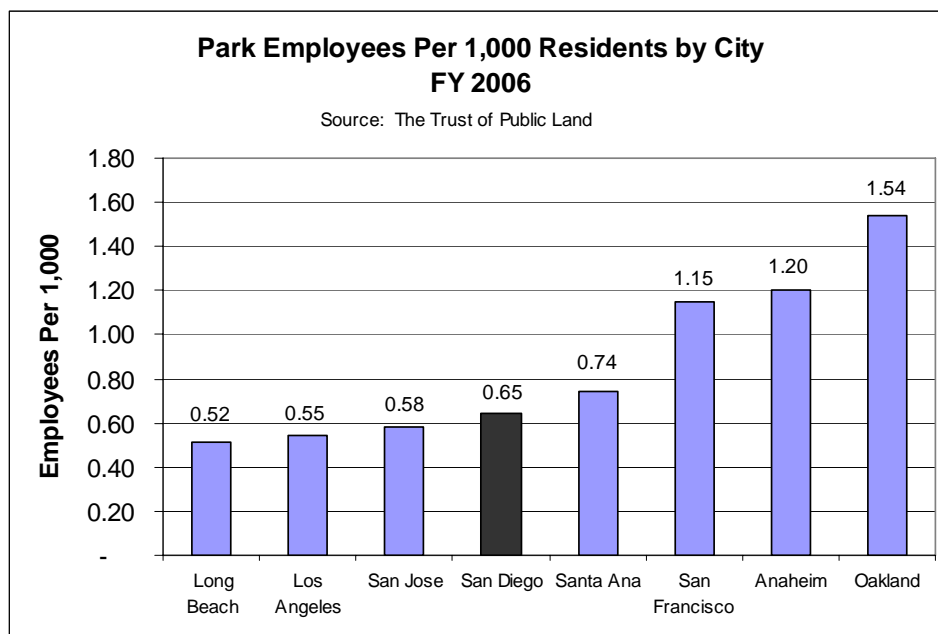


The chart below reflects the number of dog parks per 100,000 residents. San Diego ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> with 13 dog parks, behind San Francisco with a reported total of 27.



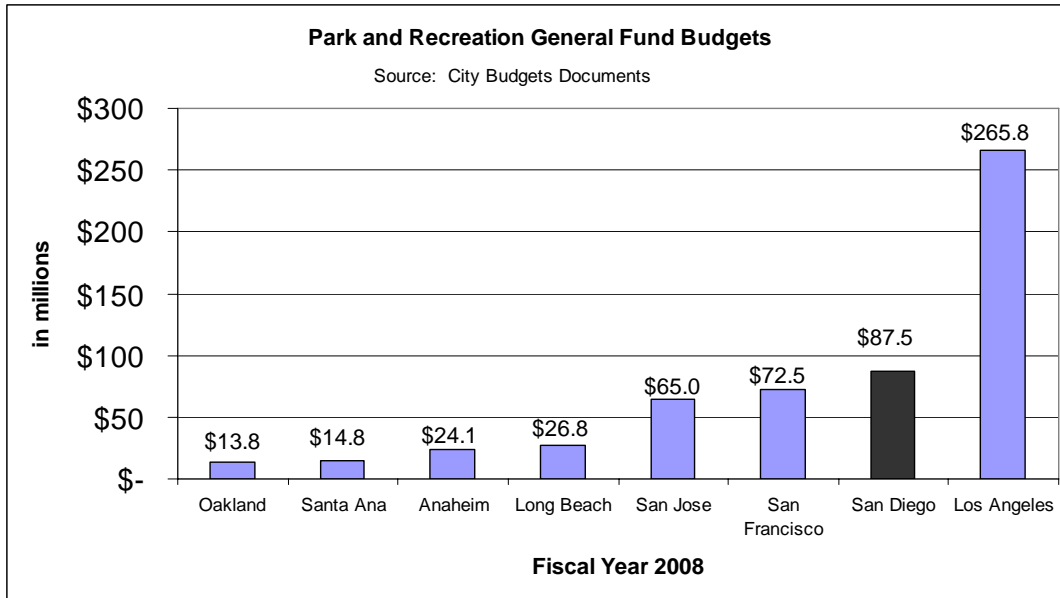
### Staffing

The following chart reflects the total Park and Recreation Full-Time Equivalents (Staff) for each of the comparison cities. In 2006, San Diego ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of the eight cities compared.

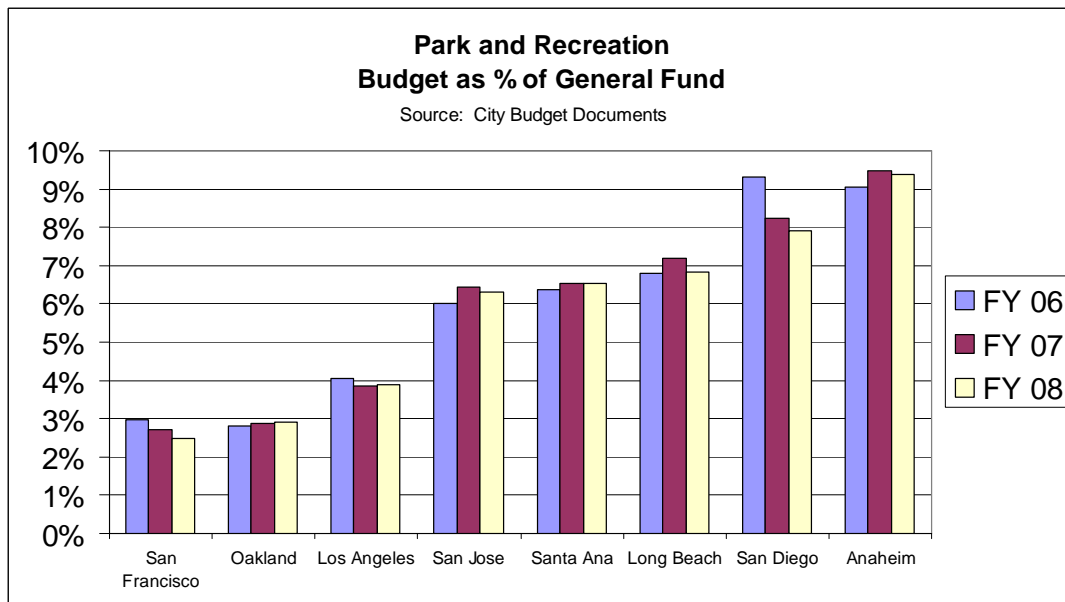


### Operating Expenditures

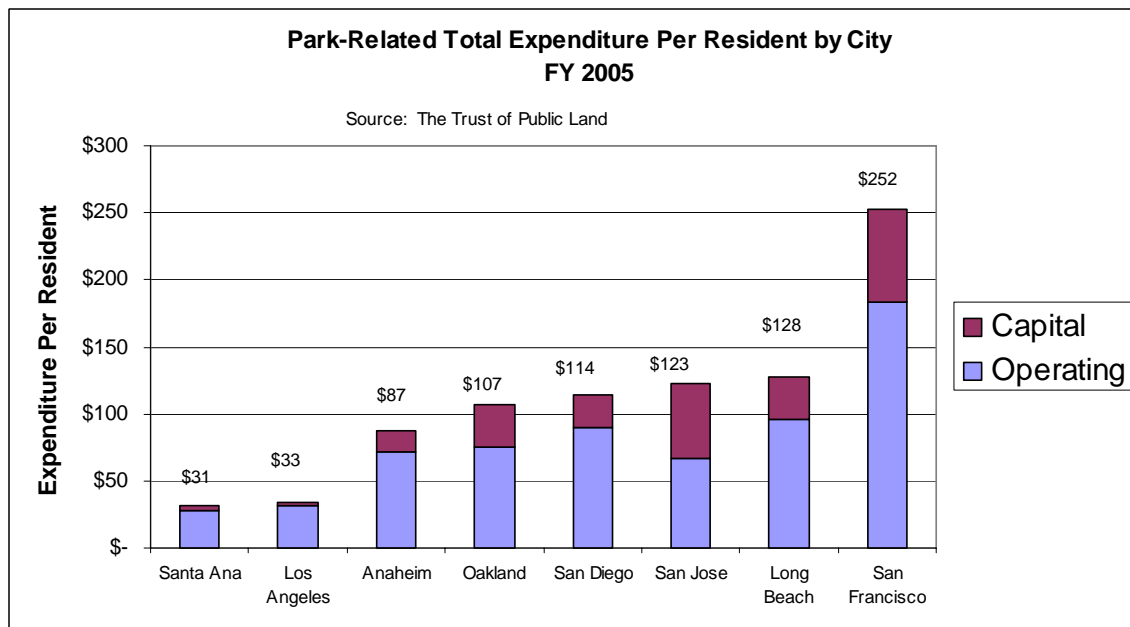
The following chart reflects the total Park and Recreation General Fund budgets for Fiscal Year 2008, based on a review by IBA staff. San Diego ranks 2nd only to Los Angeles in total General Fund dollars allocated to Park and Recreation activities. It is worth noting that functions within Park and Recreation vary among cities; some include marine and port functions; others include planning, and support to the film industry.



The following chart reflects the total Park and Recreation General Fund budgets for Fiscal Years 2006, 2007 and 2008 expressed as a percentage of the General Fund. San Diego ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in the comparison, based on the 2008 figures. It is worth noting that functions within Park and Recreation vary among cities; some include marine and port functions; others include planning, and support to the film industry. This comparison reflects slight changes year-to-year, and shows San Diego's percentage of the General Fund allocated to Park and Recreation activities has declined over this three year period.



The chart below reflects FY 2005 operating and capital expenditures for park-related activities per resident, with San Diego reporting a total of \$114 per City resident, or 4<sup>th</sup> in the comparison.

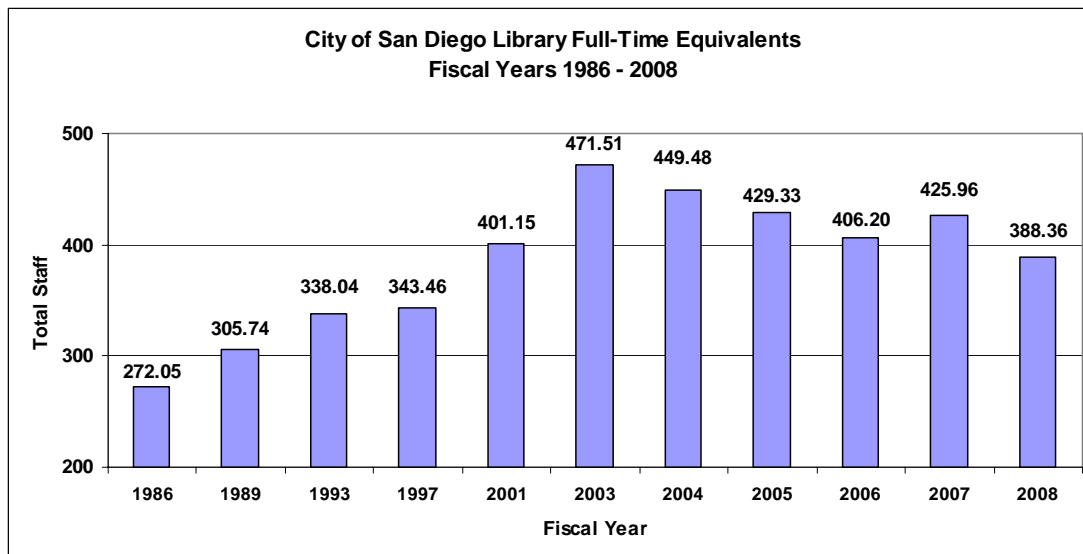


### **CITY OF SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL TRENDS**

The charts in this section depict historical trending for the City of San Diego Library System and the Park and Recreation Department. The data for this section comes from City of San Diego Budget documents and information provided by the Library and Park and Recreation Departments. The charts in this section are arranged into three categories: Staffing, Services, and General Fund Expenditures; first for the Library, followed by the Park and Recreation.

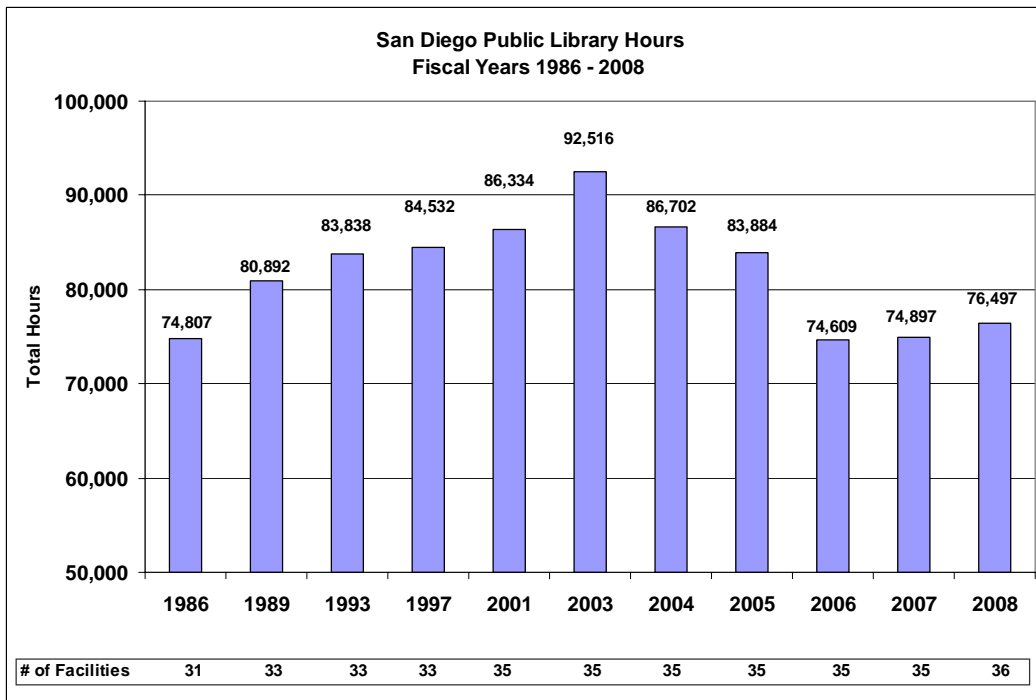
#### **Library Historical Staffing**

The following chart reflects the total Library Full-Time Equivalents (Staff) for select Fiscal Years between 1986 and 2008.

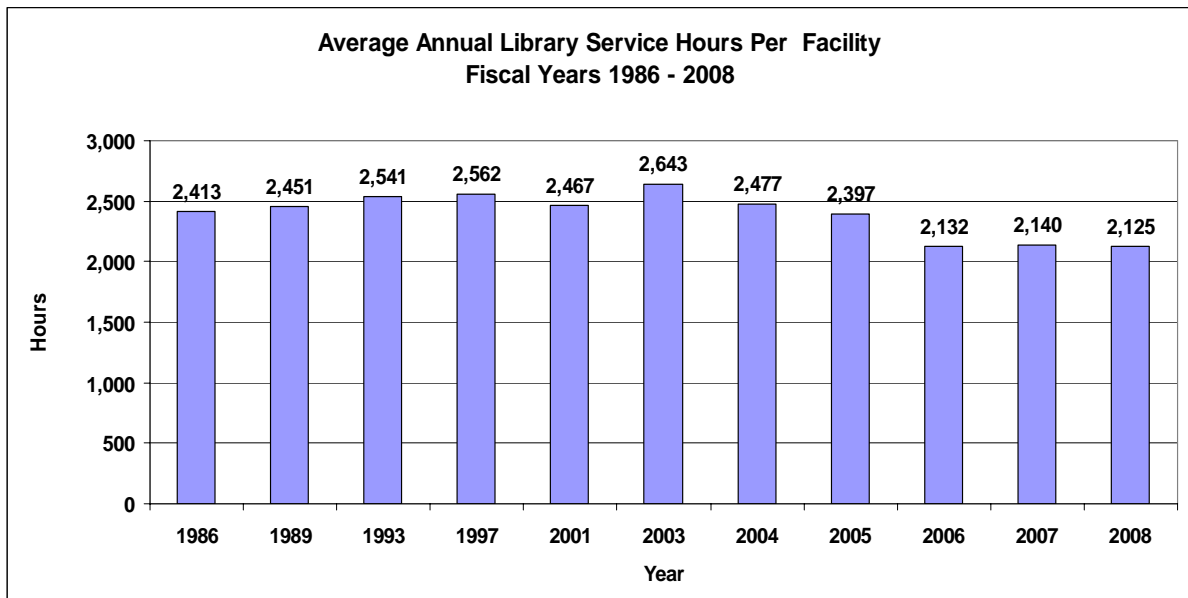


### **Library Historical Services**

The following chart reflects the annual library service hours and facilities for select Fiscal Years between 1986 and 2008.

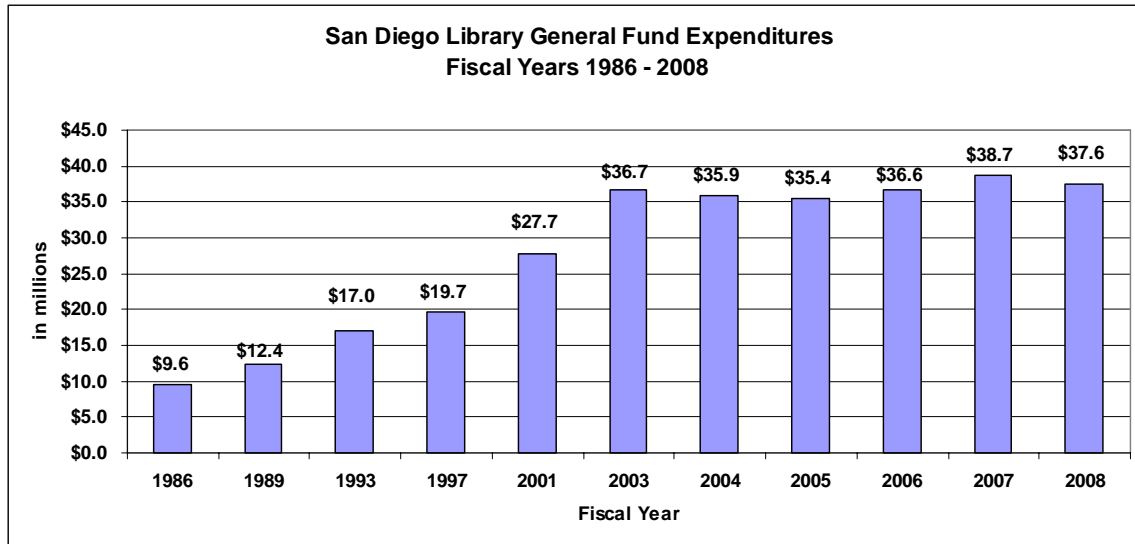


The following chart reflects the annual library service hours per facility for select Fiscal Years between 1986 and 2008.



### **Library Historical General Fund Expenditures**

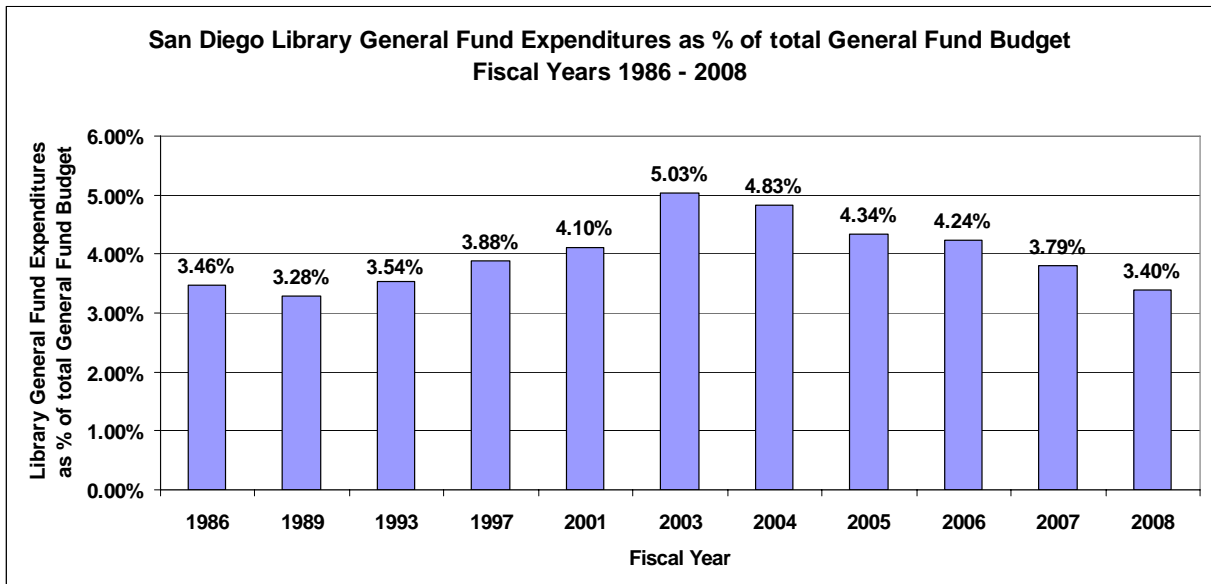
The following chart reflects the Library Department's General Fund expenditures for select Fiscal Years between 1986 and 2008.



Starting in Fiscal Year 2002 the San Diego Public Library system's General Fund appropriation has been governed by the Library Ordinance passed by the City Council on November 27, 2000. The Library Ordinance requires the City Manager at that time, and now Mayor, to propose a set percentage of the total General Fund budget for general library operations, maintenance, and supplies. However, if the Mayor determines that anticipated revenues for any fiscal year will be insufficient to maintain City services necessary for preserving the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens, the Mayor may ask the City Council to temporarily suspend compliance with the Library Ordinance. For Fiscal Years 2002, 2003, and 2004, the General Fund allocation proposed by the City Manager achieved the required funding percentage. However, it should be noted that Library Grant funds were included in the calculation to achieve the required percentage. Since 2004, the Library Ordinance has been waived for each Fiscal Year. Per the Library Ordinance, the Library system's General Fund Allocation for Fiscal Year 2002 through 2005 and future fiscal years is required to be:

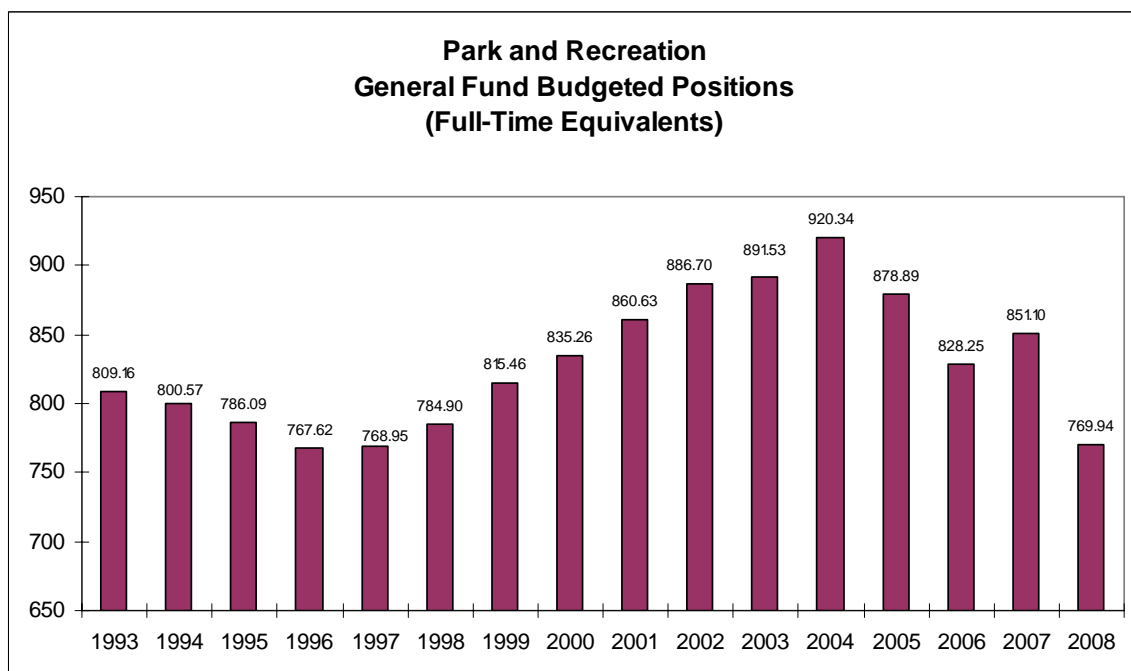
| Fiscal Year                   | % of total General Fund Budget |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2002                          | 4.5%                           |
| 2003                          | 5.0%                           |
| 2004                          | 5.5%                           |
| 2005 – Future<br>Fiscal Years | 6.0%                           |

The following chart reflects the Library Department's General Fund expenditures as a percent of the total General Fund Budget for select Fiscal Years between 1986 and 2008.



### **Park and Recreation Historical Staffing**

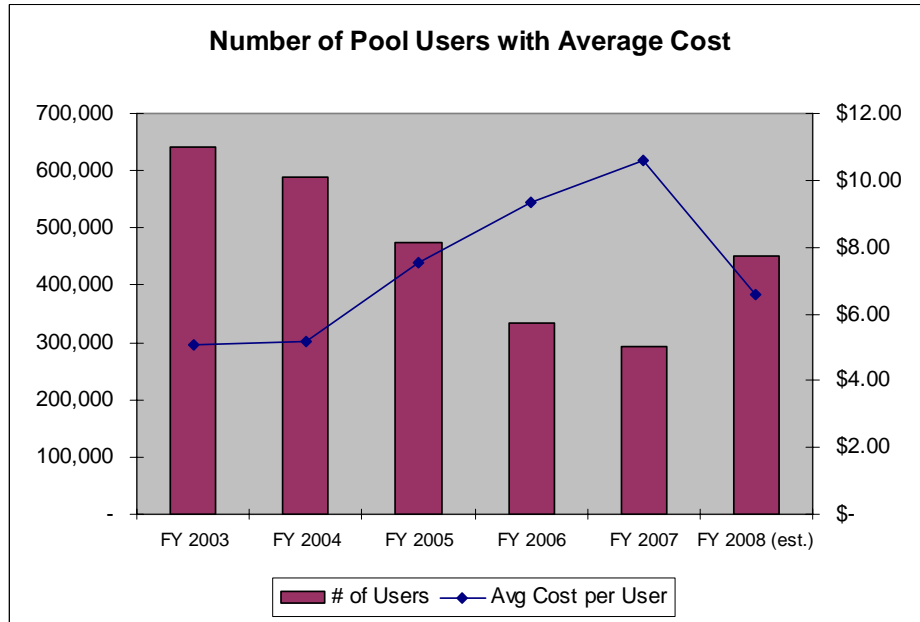
The following chart reflects the total Park and Recreation General Fund Full-Time Equivalents (Staff) for Fiscal Years 1993 - 2008. It should be noted that reorganizations have occurred over this period of time, both increasing and decreasing staff in various fiscal years. Examples of this include the addition of the Mt. Hope Cemetery as a division of the department, as well as the recent loss of the Park Planning Division.



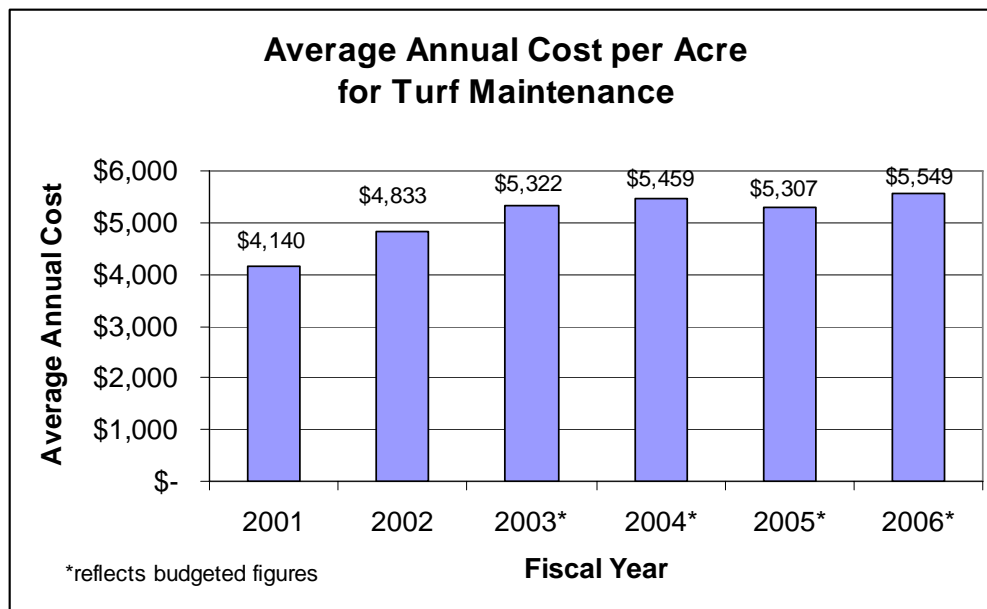


### Park and Recreation Historical Services

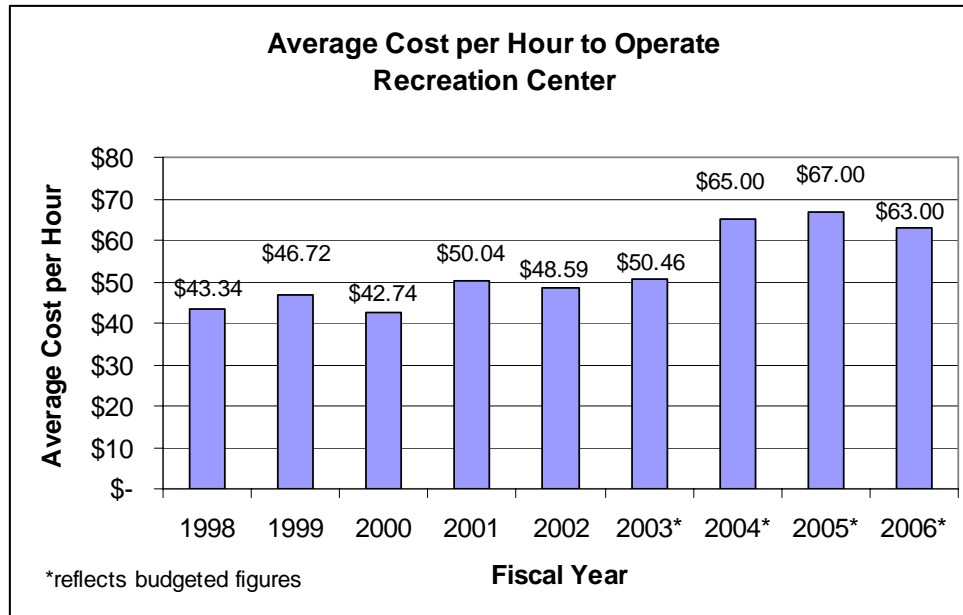
The following chart reflects the number of swimming pool users from Fiscal Years 2003 through Fiscal Year 2008. Also shown is the average cost of the swimming pool program per user.



The following chart reflects average annual cost per acre for turf maintenance at parks, joint-use areas and athletic fields for Fiscal Years 2001 through Fiscal Year 2006, based on data collected from previous city budgets. Some figures reflect budgeted figures only, due to the removal of this information from recent budget documents.

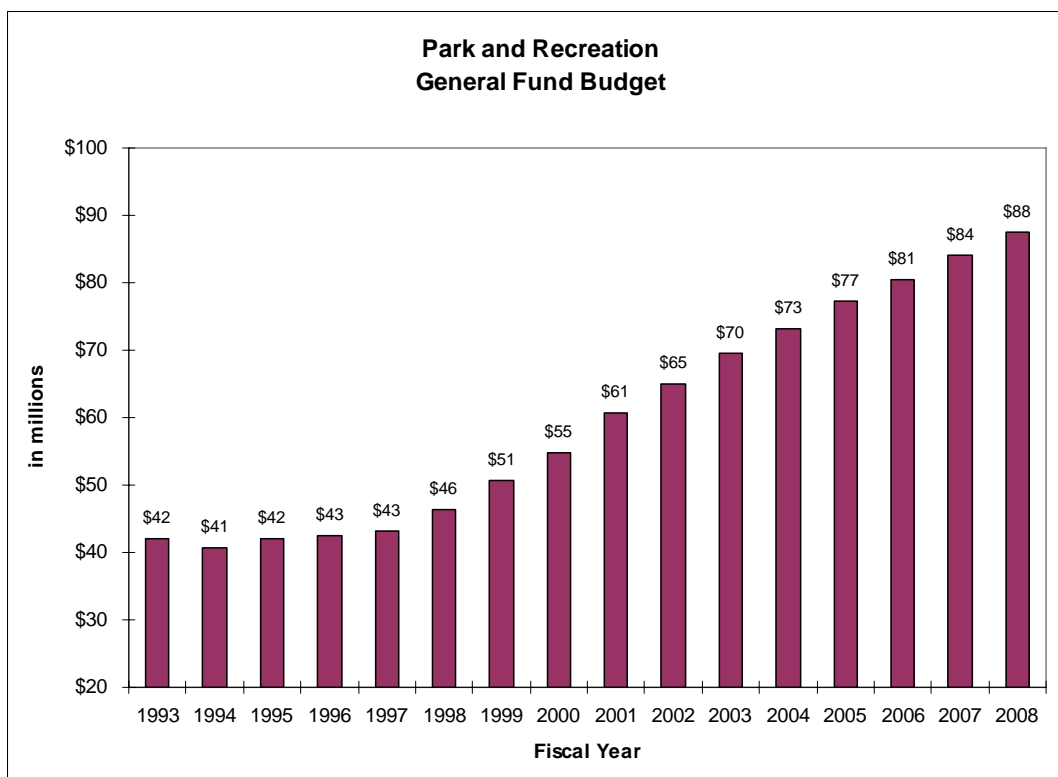


The following chart reflects the average cost per hour to operate a recreation center for Fiscal Years 1998 through Fiscal Year 2006, based on data collected from previous city budgets. Some figures reflect budgeted figures only, due to the removal of this information from more recent budget documents.

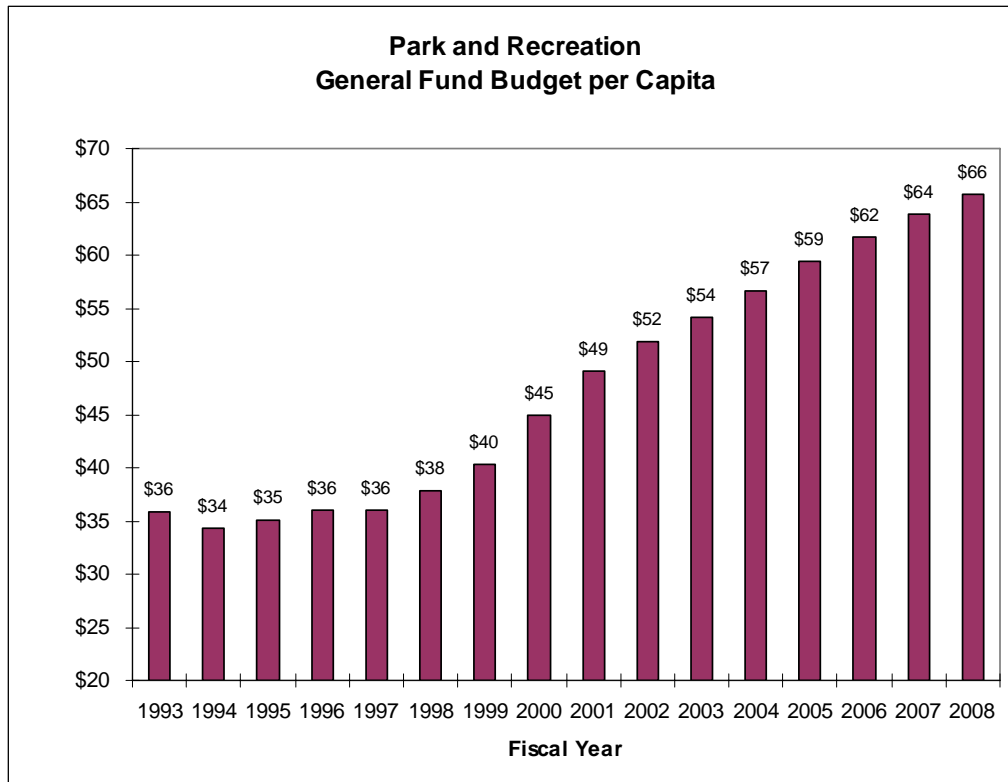


**Park and Recreation Historical General Fund Expenditures**

The following chart reflects the Park and Recreation Department's General Fund budgets for Fiscal Years 1993 through 2008. It is worth noting that reorganizations over this period of time affect the budget amounts for each fiscal year, as with staffing levels.



The following chart reflects the Park and Recreation Department's General Fund budgets per capita for Fiscal Years 1993 through 2008. It is worth noting that reorganizations over this period of time affect the budget amounts for each fiscal year, as with staffing levels.



#### **Fiscal Year 2007 Budget Changes**

A significant increase in budgeted positions occurred in Fiscal Year 2007 with the addition of 270.51 supplemental positions to the General Fund budget. These positions previously existed, but remained unbudgeted, and affect budget comparisons as total staffing figures increase, but with likely no corresponding impact to service levels. This was an effort to increase transparency in the budget process, and to reflect the full costs of providing services. For Park and Recreation, this effort increased General Fund positions by 13.68 FTEs, while for the Library Department, 7.94 positions were added. Concurrently, the vacancy factor was introduced with the Fiscal Year 2007 Budget, and for the first time, an adjustment was made to each department reducing personnel costs to account for vacancies that are expected throughout the fiscal year. The vacancy factor adjustments mitigated the cost associated with the addition of supplemental positions to the budget.

### City Management Program

The City Management Program is part of the business and management reforms currently underway throughout the City. It is a program designed to integrate strategic planning and performance monitoring efforts with the budget decision-making process, and is managed by the Mayor's Business Office. All City departments are currently implementing the City Management Program, developing individual tactical plans, with the creation of goals and objectives, and related measures. This initial citywide process is planned to conclude in December 2007, with the product to be used as the basis for information to be included in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2009 budget, and utilized for the budget deliberation process.

### Resident Satisfaction and Priority Surveys

Behavior Research Center, Inc. was previously commissioned by the City of San Diego to measure residents' satisfaction with City services. The study addressed the following issues:

- Attitudes about the quality of life in San Diego;
- Overall satisfaction with the City's performance in providing services;
- Satisfaction with 34 specific City-provided services;
- Utilization of selected City-provided services and facilities;
- Attitudes about safety in the City of San Diego.

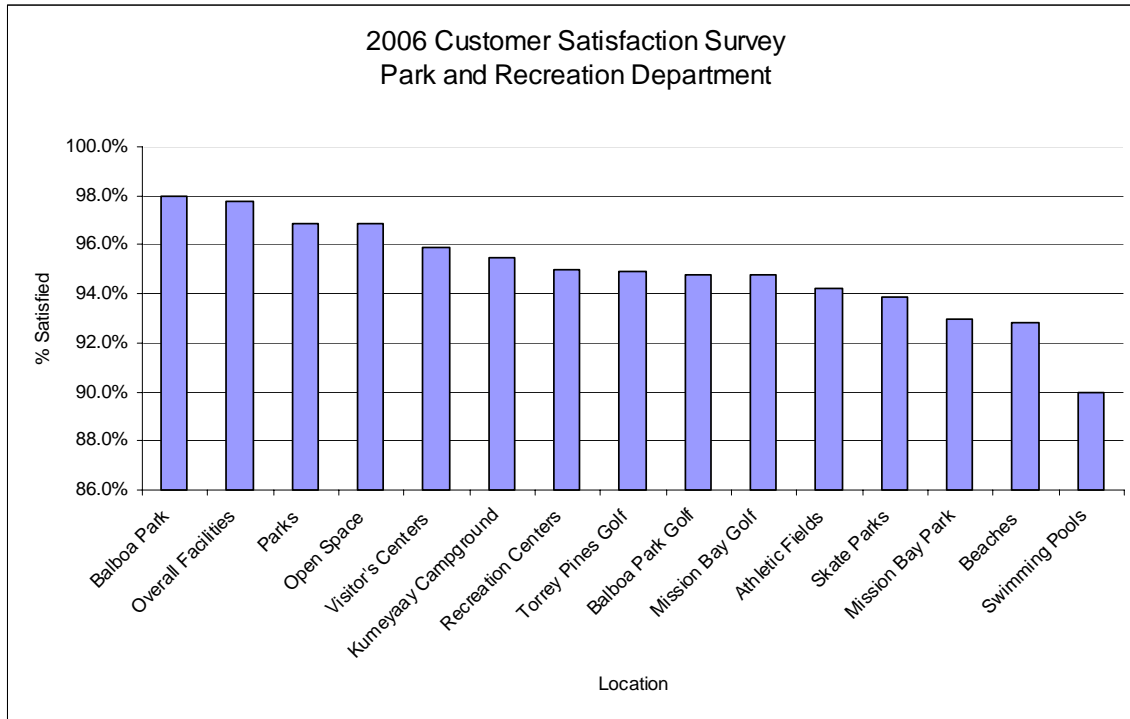
Last published in January 2005, the study represented the tenth annual City-wide resident satisfaction study, and provided key information in assessing the quality and effectiveness of the delivery of City services to the community. In addition, the City had commissioned a service priority ranking survey every three years to determine citizens' funding priorities to be utilized for budget development.

The Mayor's Customer Services Department recently initiated customer surveys at counters in City facilities which serve the public, and also on-line through the City's website. While limited in scope, the surveys provided the public an opportunity to rate services received, and provide valuable feedback. In March 2007, the Mayor's Customer Services Department released the results of the Citywide Customer Satisfaction Survey. The Survey was conducted from March 19<sup>th</sup> through March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007, with a total of 4,597 responses. One-third of the surveys included written comments.

The Library Department received a total of 1,702 completed surveys with a rating of 4.57 on a scale of 1-5 when rating quality of service delivered. In addition, the Library Department received 476 comments with 92% of the comments positive.

The Park and Recreation Department received a total of 1,425 completed surveys with a rating of 4.60 on the 5 point scale, and received 281 comments with 90% of those considered positive.

Separately, the Park and Recreation Department has typically undertaken an Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey of park users. Last done in 2006, the results of the survey reflect that over nine out of ten patrons (97.8%) rate their level of overall satisfaction with park and recreation facilities as “satisfied” or “very satisfied”. The following chart reflects the specific results for various facilities.



With the implementation of the City Management Program, efforts should be made to broaden the current survey processes. The evaluation of City services by residents will become a key element in measuring success, and a concerted effort to provide the important feedback mechanism should be done on a City-wide basis covering a wide variety of City services, by users and non-users of various services.

The resident satisfaction survey and a service priority ranking survey would allow City departments to be evaluated on a regular basis with results that can be utilized for assessing program and activity success across multiple departments, in conjunction with the budget process and newly-instituted performance management tools. It is recommended that funds be allocated for this purpose in the upcoming proposed budget, and that City departments not be left to try to gather this data individually, or inconsistently. It is estimated that an annual survey could be completed by an outside firm at a cost of \$20,000 to \$25,000.

## CONCLUSION

The City Council requested the IBA prepare an independent review of department service levels, including benchmarking, for the Park and Recreation and Library Departments. The IBA reviewed available information, including best practices and recommended criteria on this subject, from various governmental organizations, and reviewed data compiled on a statewide basis for the California State Library Foundation, and nationally by the Trust for Public Lands, and the Public Library Data Service.

**This report is intended to provide information that has not been readily available in recent budget documents, and to encourage dialogue about expectations related to desired budgetary information and performance measures in the future.**

The Budget and Finance Committee may wish to request that the Library and Park and Recreation Departments update this data, or similar data, annually and incorporate it in the annual budget process.

The evaluation of City services by residents will become a key element in measuring success, and a concerted effort to provide the important feedback mechanism should be done on a City-wide basis covering a wide variety of City services, by users and non-users of various services. The IBA recommends that funds be allocated for this purpose in the upcoming proposed budget. It is estimated that an annual survey could be completed by an outside firm at a cost of \$20,000 to \$25,000.

If the Budget and Finance Committee finds this report valuable, the IBA suggests, with the concurrence of the Committee, that IBA staff duplicate this base-line effort for the Police and San Diego Fire-Rescue Departments, prior to the consideration of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2009 Public Safety Budgets.

**[SIGNED]**

---

Jeffrey Sturak  
Fiscal & Policy Analyst

**[SIGNED]**

---

Elaine DuVal  
Fiscal & Policy Analyst

**[SIGNED]**

---

APPROVED: Andrea Tevlin  
Independent Budget Analyst

Attachments:

1. City of Raleigh, North Carolina – Performance Indicators
2. City of Sunnyvale, California - Program Budget
3. City of Peoria, Arizona – Program Budget